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POEMS OF THE HOME AND THE HOMELAND

BY
WILLIAM BRYANT, D.D.



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To

MY BELOVED WIFE

whose sweet comradeship has been life's richest
gift, these poems are affectionately dedicated.

"A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY";

Jersey City, N. J., August 12th, 1872;

and looking forward to

Detroit, Mich., August 12th, 1922.

INTRODUCTION

For over 50 years, these and many other verses have been accumulating. More than 200 of them have found merciful publishers in various papers and magazines from Portland, Maine, to Tacoma, Washington, beginning with New York City in 1871, and are now republished by permission. They appeared in the Presbyterian, Herald and Presbyter, Evangelist, N. Y. Observer, Westminster, N. Y. Witness, North and West, Presbyterian Journal, Mining Gazette, Detroit Journal, Christian Endeavor World, Mid Continent, Des Moines State Register, Cleveland Leader, Criterion, and some twenty other papers, but especially in the Michigan Presbyterian. Some of them were published in "Poets and Poetry of Iowa"; and several Hymn Books in U. S., Canada, England and Scotland.

To one of our sons is due the happy thought that our approaching Golden Anniversary, August 12th, 1922, was a fitting occasion to be celebrated by sending forth in advance a volume containing a few poems selected without much regard to their rela-

Introduction

tionship or perhaps their superiority over some others that might have been chosen.

Obviously such a volume must not be too bulky, trespassing too heavily on the indulgence of patient readers; which means that a large number of poems must be excluded that might have claimed a place as worthily as others.

Without any apology or excuse these "Poems of the Home and Homeland" are sent forth on an errand of love and adventure.

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POEMS OF THE HOME
AND THE HOMELAND

Poems of Childhood

TO AN INFANT

One more speck of humanity
Takes its place in a busy world;
Full of the infinite "what may be"
Into a chaos of wonders hurled.

What shall your life be? baby, say,
May we glance at the great unknown,
And strive to enter its mysteries,
Or patiently wait until time has flown?

Much of joy you have brought along,
Will you leave it or keep your share?
Much of sorrow is spread around,
Many a pitfall, many a snare.

Infinite joy and infinite woe
Are buried deep in your little heart;
Never mind, baby, sleep while you may:
The future lies hid, you will learn your part.

Wonderful thought, too grandly strange
For us to fathom with mortal ken;
In baby's heart and in baby's brain
All germs of good or evil as men.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Cloudland, dreamland, fairyland now
Are your worlds of shadows where thought may
play:
Live in them, joy in them, fear no ill,
Speck of humanity, dream while you may.

TO A BABE

How shall I greet thee, sweet, my sweet?
From thy golden crown to thy dainty feet,
So fair, so tender, so full of grace;
Heaven's own light in thy dimpled face.

How shall I greet thee, sweet, my sweet?
Nothing but love thine eyes must meet,
So soft, so gentle, so wondrous fair;
O baby dear, with thy princess air!

How shall I greet thee, sweet, my sweet?
Hushed be the sounds of the noisy street.
Let me sit and watch. Unmarred by fears,
I dream of the promise of future years.

How shall I greet thee, sweet, my sweet?
Whom God's own benedictions greet?
Thy coming to earth such hope has brought,
For life's true meaning, for nobler thought.

Poems of Childhood

How shall I greet thee, sweet, my sweet?
For time will travel with steps too fleet
To keep thee always so dainty fair.
But we trust in God, and His loving care.

TO BABY HELEN ON HER FIRST
BIRTHDAY

I think I hear the snow birds say,
Flitting past me, so blithe and gay,
"Helen is one year old today."

One year is such a little while;
Weeping and song, tear drop and smile;
But on the journey it marks its mile.

One year of life for my little girl,
Caught from the ocean of life, a pearl,
Amid the tides that eddy and swirl.

Blessings on thee, O baby dear;
Let not thy heart begin to fear:
Turn to sunshine the falling tear.

Joys await thee, music and song;
Friends are near, to guard thee from wrong;
God is above thee; His love is strong.

What is thy future? Who can guess?
Friend and foe may around thee press;
But God is thy Father, only to bless.

Angels are near thee, day by day;
Many who love thee will fondly pray.
For God's kind grace all along thy way.

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

He sat in the book-lined study,
As the evening shadows fell,
And across the distant common
Sounded a vesper bell;
And thought grew somber and leaden,
And the brain refused its spell.

Then soft on the fast-closed portal
A gentle knock was heard,
To fancy's mind like the tapping
Of some stranger woodland bird;
It was only a gentle knocking,
The evening stillness stirred.

But the father knew its meaning;
"Come in," he gently said.
He was tired and disappointed,
For the day had swiftly sped,

Poems of Childhood

And failed to solve the problems
That were passing through his head.

Noiselessly the foot-falls
Traveled the little space;
Softly up to the father
Pressed that childish face;
Kindly he stooped to gather
Her in his fond embrace.

Then he gently said to his daughter,
Who stood there, sweet and mild,
As trustfully gazing upward
Into his face she smiled,
In a tone of kind inquiry:
"What did you want, my child?"

She laid her two hands fondly
In his with sweet caress,
And said in words that faltered,
As though she must confess:
"Papa, I only wanted
To be with you, I guess."

Ah! wider than all our puzzles
Of questions, wise and great,
Deeper than earth's enigmas,
That trouble Church and State,
Higher than all the problems
On which men legislate,

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Is to read the sweet, pure story
That God's own grace has wrought;
To come in heart communion
With a pure child's guileless thought;
To learn the way of heaven,
Just as the Master taught.

There are lessons there, my brother,
Nobler and grander yet;
There are glorious inspirations
That never know regret;
There are drawings to the Father
That we dare not forget.

For a little child shall lead us
Higher than earthly lore;
In paths of truer knowledge
Than we have trod before;
Placing our hands in the Father's,
On the eternal shore.

LITTLE FEET

Little feet, little feet,
You must tread the rough highways of life:
Naught you know of dangers that are rife;
Good and evil meet in deadly strife:
 Dark deceptive ground;
 Pitfalls all around;—
Who shall guard your journey, little feet?

Little feet, little feet;
All the wisdom in a childish brain
Cannot for one single hour sustain
Life's rough conflict. All your plans in vain;
 Feeble is your might,
 Glimmering your light;
Who shall be your guardian, little feet?

Little feet, little feet;
Loving hearts oft tremble as we gaze
In the future, full of unseen ways,
Scattered o'er with dark and threatening days,—
 Oh, that we could keep
 Safe, awake, asleep,
All through life's dark perils, little feet.

Little feet, little feet,
There are hills to climb, to you unknown;
There are foes to be by you o'erthrown;

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

There are ways, dark ways, to walk alone;
Yet close by your side,
Walks the Lord who died,
Died that He might rescue little feet.

Little feet, little feet,
Trip along your way with merry song,
Children to the Lord of life belong.
Woe to him who tries to lead you wrong!
Trust in Christ today,
Happy then your way;
Jesus is your Shepherd, little feet.

OUR CHILDREN

Despise them not, my brother, for their wills and
ways are weak;
And the world is new and strange to them, and in
thoughtlessness they speak;
And the tempter stands at each cross-road, and
beckons to the wrong;
And they waver, and they stumble, and the way
seems very long.

They can not read the course of sin; they can not
guess its wiles;
And often he who ought to guide most cruelly
beguiles.

Poems of Childhood

They are trustful, they are hopeful, they believe the
words we say;
They have not yet learned to reason: they have
hardly learned to pray.

But the messengers whom God has sent to lead their
paths aright
Are pointing to the upward path, where streams
the guiding light;
And their angels, nearest to God's throne, have
always access there;
And the God of heaven has always time to hear the
children's prayer.

Despise them not, my brother, for they teach us
God's own will.
They bid us trust his loving care: they whisper,
"Peace, be still."
They point to roads of trustful love, in heaven's
diviner plan.
God's blessing on the children, his sweetest gift to
man!

Sonnets

UNTO THEE, O LORD

O blessed Jesus, what am I to thee,
That thou shouldst condescend to own me
friend?

I love thee, and will love thee to the end;
And yet I wonder that thou lovest me.
Were my love stronger, evil thoughts must flee.
Too oft, alas, with purer thoughts they blend,
And even crush the prayers that would ascend.
O when from sin shall I be wholly free?

Give me thy Spirit. All the grace is thine.
It is so blessed just to trust that grace,
And take whatever thy pure will demands.
Knowing at least that thou art all-divine,
I read the law of heaven in thy face,
And welcome joy or sorrow from thy hands.

LET US FORGET

Let us forget: but can we? Memory weaves
So firm a web, so hard to tear apart.
That which was written, graven on the heart,
Is carved as legends grim on stony leaves,
And careth not that mortal joys or grieves.
Oh, the stern power of memory's subtile art,
Defying aid of compass, map or chart.
It grants no mercy, and no loss retrieves.

Let us forget. We cannot. Stern as fate
Rise the pale spectres of the days long fled,
The fateful visions born of love or hate;
The scenes we hoped were numbered with the
dead
Are always lingering near some open gate.
God only can forget; and love instead.

BEYOND THE CLOUDS

Forgive me, Lord, if in my inmost soul
I ever doubted thy unfailing grace,
Or let the earth-clouds hide thy loving face,
Or just the little part obscure the whole.
These sinful doubts the heart can not control,
And yet thy gracious will I would embrace,
And through each sinuous winding ever trace
The glorious hope that seeks the highest goal.

If this earth earthy claims too large a part,
Too strong an influence on the upward view,
And cramps with cruel bonds the swelling heart,
And makes the grandest visions seem untrue;
I still must rest on thy unfailing love,
And trust what here is dark will clear above.

THE SOUL'S REFUGE

O Christ eternal, sovereign of my heart;
Cruel wounds are dealt Thee both by friend and
foe;
While the sad world cries, "Whither shall we
go,
If from our lives our faith in God depart?
Where shall we anchor? Earth provides no chart,
To guide our little boats where deep tides flow,
To meet the fearful strain when tempests blow."
We cry aloud, "Thou lovest, for Thou art."

O, blessed Christ, our souls must rest in Thee;
There is no other refuge for the lost.
We still believe e'en when no light we see;
Thou hast redeemed us at such awful cost.
We long, we yearn, we give our souls in trust;
In life and death we love Thee, as we must.

Poems of Nature

DAWN

Who comes so boldly with advancing banners to
the realms of night?

What means this phalanx of swift marching spears-
men clad in light?

Through rocky defiles in the eastern sky silent and
grand,

They storm the fastness on night's rocky cliffs, that
stalwart band.

No trumpet blast leads on the advancing host, nor
beat of drum,

Slow, grand, majestic, climbing up the eastern skies
they come.

Swiftly retreat the hosts of heaven, pale, queenly
stars of night;

Myriads in rank, their light grows feeble, and they
take to flight.

O Kingly Sun, before whom all this heavenly host
beats swift retreat,

We wonder not that ages past men worshipped at
thy feet;

Stormed the steep cliffs, and on their loftiest peaks
in mighty scorn

Flies the red banner of thy royal pride. All hail
the morn!

HE LOVETH THE BEAUTIFUL

He loveth the beautiful;
He hath scattered it everywhere,
And nature so dutiful
Responds with its visions rare.

Beauty in earth, and air, and sky;
Beauty in all things around us;
All crying,—“With glory He crowned us.”
Oh! how fair beyond compare
The bright horizons that bound us.

Flowers with their delicate tints of bloom,
Subtly wafting their sweet perfume,
Are scattered in rich profusion;
Lavished without confusion.

And the skies blue-tinted, with here and there
A cloud's white wing, floating through air.
And at night the stars in glorious sheen,
Gazing on all this wondrous scene,
The blue and the gold smiling down on the green.

The sunrise bursting in crimson light,
From the Eastern gate of the vanished night,
Passing away to the Western door,
And fading in glory on golden shore.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Then lance and spear point swift advance,
Lightning flashes, the sterner glance
Of the great Creator, whose mighty hand
Opens these glimpses of visions grand,
Till the veil of darkness o'er Heaven falls,
And closes in silence those mystic halls.

Alpine glaciers like diamonds bright,
Shine in the flashing of God's great light,
Where His torches gleam through the day and
 night,
Rainbow bridges from shore to shore,
Cloud tower to abyss deep sinking,
Glory to gloryland linking;
High Heaven has opened its door.

All gorgeous hues of bright-winged bird,
And strains of melody are heard,
O'er the zephyrs' soft sweet sighing,
As the day is slowly dying.

Far away in the Orient land,
Wavy palms o'er the desert sand,
In silence bend to the master hand.

Deep beneath the fathomless tide,
Gems of beauty serenely hide;
Sea shells painted with gorgeous hue,
Mosses and sea-weed hid from view.
Ages and ages have onward trod,
Seen alone by the eye of God.

Poems of Nature

Valley and wilderness, river and rill,
Desert and everlasting hill,
Hiding their mysteries dark and still.

Deep buried away in the heart of earth,
Are treasures and beauties of priceless worth;
Gems that sparkle, rubies that shine,
Gold and silver of many a mine,
Silently hidden by hand divine.

Scenes of new splendor, till wondering we fall,
Acknowledging Him as the monarch of all.

Add to these glories for mortal eyes,
Add to these visions of grand surprise,
Sounds for the ear, music and song,
Melody, harmony all day long.

Music of bird, of sea, of air,
Voices of nature everywhere,
Swelling the anthem grand and sweet!
Then fall in homage before His feet.

If earth is so fair, the work of His hand,
How shall we picture that vision grand,
Of the Lord Himself in His glory land?

THE WIND AND THE SEA

The wind from the sea went sailing, sailing,
 Far away;
And the lonely sea kept wailing, wailing,
 Night and day:
 "Why did I ever doubt her?
 'Tis so dreary without her?
 I'd throw my arms about her
 in sweet rest."

Softly the breeze came sighing, sighing,
 Back again.
Alone she was slowly dying, dying,
 For the main.
 It was the old, old story,
 Beyond the mountains hoary,
 As sunset's crimson glory
 Lit the west.

And o'er them the wild birds singing, singing,
 Evening song,
And fairy bells gently ringing, ringing,
 All night long.
 Hear ye the wind and ocean,
 Thrilling with new emotion?
 Sweet tale of true devotion,
 All confessed.

Poems of Nature

Good-night, good-night, they are sleeping, sleeping,
Day is done.
And the stars their watch are keeping, keeping,
For the sun.
Leave them quiet together,
For calm or stormy weather,
Like birds 'neath folded feather,
In their nest.

MOODS

I float upon the changing stream of life,
With here an eddy, there a sunken rock;
I choose my boat with view to tempest's strife,
Supple and strong to stand the sudden shock.

And there are hours of quiet eventide,
When the smooth waters softly flowing by,
Invite my bark in dreamy peace to glide,
'Mid leafy banks, beneath the starry sky.

I have my boat for storm and rushing stream,
For wind and wave to sudden fury wrought;
I have my moods to float along and dream,
Just dipping oars in rhythm with my thought.

I have my boat, narrow and swift of flight
That skims the water in its rapid way;
I have my heavy boat; broad, strong, and tight,
That glides on slowly all the weary day.

FADING LEAVES—THE RESURRECTION

Trees of the forest, fair to behold,
Crimson thy ash, with maple of gold,
Fairest sight since those days of old
When Adam and Eve in Paradise told
That wonderful old, old story.

O where are kings so royally crowned?
Where may such sparkling gems be found?
Where such carpet to deck the ground,
In castle or palace the wide earth round,
As the woods in Autumn glory?

Ah! It is true that death draws near;
Sad hectic flush of a dying year;
And each fair dewdrop is but a tear,
Shed over nature's silent bier.
By the heavens bending in pity.

But as the sun in his setting throws
His brightest glories at just the close,
Tints of gold, and purple, and rose;
While the very windows of heaven disclose
A glimpse of the golden city;

So these woods in their dying hour,
Shed far and wide their noblest dower,
Of crimson and gold in a bounteous shower,

Poems of Nature

Wielding a strange magnetic power,
And lifting man's heart rejoicing.

Gratefully earth the gift receives,
And snow soon falling on withered leaves,
Her old time glory and strength retrieves,
She leaps triumphant, her fetters cleaves
The coming of Spring-time voicing.

So shall man when the strength decays,
Nearing the end of a weary race,
When gold to silver has given place,
He is gathered home in God's own grace,
Like a ripened shock of corn.

Sweet evening time, blest time of light,
Unmarred by Winter's cruel blight,
Undarkened by the approaching night;
The sun shall set more fair, more bright
For the resurrection morn.

ON THE OCEAN

There is no rest like the weary sleep
Of the storm-rocked restless ocean.
The very calm is a holy psalm,
Tender with wrapt devotion.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

There is no peace like the skies' deep peace
Upon which the soft waves ponder.
No smile above in the eyes of love,
As fair as the blue dome yonder.

Just the faintest throbbing of ocean's breast;
Not a sign or a groan of sorrow;
As to bird in nest comes the boon of rest,
No dream of the unknown morrow.

When we, so soon, for the last long sleep,
Lie all alone 'mid the sadness,
Will that same sweet calm like a holy psalm
Whisper eternal gladness?

Far beyond the blue of the sky and sea,
Beyond the deep waves' sighing,
Shall we land on that shore where comes no more
Darkness, or storm, or dying?

CALM ON MID-OCEAN

Hush, throbbing heart—be still:
The very waves around you whisper, peace;
The sleeping winds all needless murmur cease;
 Hush! All is quiet,
 And earth's wild riot
 Obeys a grander will.

Let peace dwell in each breast;
Bring not the noisy pleadings of the street
To mar the calmness of this kind retreat.
 Hush! Every sound,
 For all around,
 The listening breezes rest.

The bright blue sky above
Bends down and kisses in pure love the sea,
Trustfully looking up with heart as free.
 Shine down, fair Sun;
 Blend them in one,
 The sky and sea in love.

Poems of Aspiration

A PRAYER

Speak to me out of the silence,
Thou God of an infinite grace;
Let me but hear Thy message;
Let me but see Thy face.

I was busy and tired and wayworn;
I followed my own poor will:
But I long for Thy tender leading:
Speak, while my voice is still.

I have fretted about my failures;
I have fainted along the way;
I have murmured at contradictions;
I have sometimes refused to pray.

But I sit at Thy feet, O Master;
Bending my will to Thine:
I will listen and wait; obedient,
When I hear Thy voice divine.

Forgive me that once I doubted;
That I feared to trust in Thee:
Lord, I believe and follow
Wherever Thou leadest me.

A PASTOR'S ASPIRATION

If, when the darkness ushers in the night,
And buries in forgetfulness the light

With shadows deep;

If, in that silent hour of peace and rest,
I, too, like a tired bird, seeking its nest,

Lie down to sleep;

And if, unlike the bird, who with gay wing,
Wakes in the morn its gladsome notes to sing,

For darkness past—

If I, with folded arms and head bowed low,
Sleep on (while all things round me stir and glow)

In slumbers fast;

Friends will come round me, whispering: "He is
dead;

Silent the body, and the spirit fled;

Gone home; good-bye."

O, in that hour shall any gather near,

Too full for words, but with a silent tear,

Or stifled sigh;

Shall stoop and murmur o'er the form laid low:

"To him the highest hope of life I owe,

My guide, my friend;

He taught to hate the evil, love the right,

He led the way to purer realms of light,

Man's noblest end."

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Welcome, ye victors, to your crowns of gold,
Or a plain laurel wreath; with praise untold,
Let the air ring.

All that I ask the simpler, sweeter thought,
Of some lone wanderer lost, but homeward brought
To life and King.

Honors in arms or science strew your way,
Empires and men but live their own brief day.

I ask just this:
That when all nature dies, and like a scroll
Earth vanishes, O may some rescued soul
Greet me in bliss.

SATISFIED

When all earth's storm-dark clouds are rent
asunder,

And I cast anchor on the heavenly strand,
I know not what strange scenes of joy and wonder
Shall greet my vision in that better land.

There are the wondrous scenes of stories olden,
Inspired imaginings of sage divine,
There are the pearly gates and streets all golden,
While living fountains in full glory shine.

There are the trees of life with fruits for healing
The woes of nations for long ages past,
And the glad anthem of redemption pealing
Welcomes the voyagers safe home at last.

Poems of Aspiration

And yet 'mid all these scenes of joy and beauty,
Wondrous and glorious beyond mortal ken,
We stop and ask, half fearful of our duty.
Beyond this heavenly imagery—what then?

Shall we not tire of scenes so grand and glorious?
Is there no rest from anthem and refrain?
Must we forever join the song victorious,
To Him who for our ransom once was slain?

Listen! One blessed word tells the whole story,
Settles all questions, casts all doubts aside;
When we in heaven see Christ in his glory,
We shall be like Him, and be satisfied.

THE FAITH I SEEK

I ask not for the faith that makes the death-bed
calm and sweet;
I ask not for a Mary's faith, low at the Master's
feet.

I ask not for the martyr's faith, strong o'er the
scorching flame;
I ask not for the hero faith that shouts the Captain's
name.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

I only ask that simpler faith that takes up day by
day
The quiet task, the humble care, the lowly common
way.

The faith that walks the daily road, thoughtful of
others' care:
That draws the strength for coming trial in con-
stant praise and prayer.

The faith that, looking up to God, knows that his
way is right:
And without question fills the place, well-pleasing
in his sight.

The faith that says, "I can" to God, because he
chose our ways,
That does not murmur and complain because men
fail to praise.

Grant me, O God, that life to live which simply
follows thee;
And grows each year, by thy kind grace, more true,
more full, more free.

And when an end to mortal care thine own kind
hand shall make,
Let faith be lost in perfect love. Grant this for
Jesus' sake.

WHEN THE EYES ARE WEARIED,
LOOK UP

Weary, weary was the journey, faint the footprints
in my way;
Tired and sick my heart of sorrow, hardly left the
strength to pray;
And my eyes, grown dim with watching, failed to
mark the road ahead;
Halting, stumbling, faltering, falling, with my soul
oppressed with dread.

Then I stopped. Why try to journey when the way
seems dark and drear;
When, like mystic phantoms hovering, all things
melt my heart with fear;
When the eyes, grown dim with weeping, fail to
mark the onward track;
Shall I in despair and languish, turn my weary
footsteps back?

Nay! I pause and looking upward, to the sky so
calm and bright,
Find the rest my eyes were craving, find it in that
peaceful height:
Find the vision of the heavens makes the earthly
journey clear;
Drives away the blinding fancies of this lower
earthly sphere.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Brother, when your footsteps falter in the weary
road of life;
When your eyes grow dim with watching, and your
heart is rent with strife;
Turn your gaze up to God's heaven, rest your eyes
in quiet there;
And each step shall clear before you, in the restful-
ness of prayer.

I AM CONTENT

I am content to bear a noble discontent,
If God so wills;
To long, unsatisfied, hoping to ever climb
Some loftier hills.

I am content to wait and yearn for grander heights,
Beyond my ken:
Not satisfied and yet content, because with Him,
To try again.

I am content; though climbing would be more to
mind,
If God said, "Climb,"
To gain capacity and heart for greater things,
Heights more sublime.

I am content, by God's good grace, patient to wait;
For He knows best.
For life is only true and great where He rules all,
In toil and rest.

PRESSING ON

The gain in our lives may seem little;
The triumphs not much, over sin:
We mete not by jot and by tittle,
As daily some victory we win.

A little more patience in sorrow;
A little more courage in trial;
A little more faith for to-morrow;
A little more brave self-denial.

A little more earnest endeavor;
A little more conquest of wrong;
A little more trusting forever;
A little more joy in the song.

Thus life makes its gains, sure and steady;
And climbs just one hill day by day:
For heaven the heart grows more ready,
With God for our friend all the way.

EVENING THOUGHTS

"At evening time it shall be light."
Softly the day declineth.
The care of life's long daily fight
In evening glory shineth.
Rest, rest, sad soul,
"Christ makes thee whole;"
And thy heart's wish divineth.

The prayers, unspoken through the day,
The upward glance of sorrow,
The grief that seemed to disobey
God's will, and darkness borrow,
Are steps that raise,
By unseen ways,
To brighter scenes to-morrow.

The evening hush brings peace and rest,
The sun in glory sinking;
The light still lives beyond the west,
In spite of our sad thinking.
The evening hour,
With wond'rous power,
Even earth to heaven is linking.

THE ANGEL IN MAN'S LIFE

Is there not deep within man's inmost soul,
A holy place of purer higher thought,
Where even sin's desires no entrance find
Or shrink abashed, unwelcomed and unsought?

Where the high priest his daily offering makes,
Of thankful gift and cheerful sacrifice;
Where no intruding passion makes its way
And virtuous thoughts are undisturbed by vice.

In all men's lives unseen an angel dwells,
Spotless and holy though an unknown guest,
A guardian angel if man heeds his voice,
A weeping angel if man lives unblest.

How oft amid the world's deceitful snares,
The angel hides in silence and dismay;
Yet lingers till man's better nature dies,
Then sadly heavenward takes his lonely way.

O stay blest visitor though unbeloved;
Stay, for without thee life in darkness speeds;
Whisper above the tempest's luring voice,
Whisper of holy thoughts and noble deeds.

Have patience for man's best is very weak,
Take this poor flickering spark and fan the flame,
Make still thine home within his heart of hearts,
Lest his last hope die out in sin and shame.

LIFE'S AFTERMATH

Life hath its aftermath; judgment or dower;
Summer its autumn chill, wilting each flower;
Day with its glories fades into night's hour.

Life is a song, with its melodies sweet;
Discord with harmony strangely must meet;
And the stillness of home face the rush of the street.

War hath its triumphs, when peace must stand still;
The friend of the valley must climb the bleak hill;
And the stream that sought peacefulness drive the
new mill.

Earth hath its conflicts, each fibre to strain;
The boat harbor-rigged must encounter the main;
The primeval forest make way for the grain.

Since you, friend and I, to death's darkness must
yield,
The books of our life have their pages unsealed,
While eternity's mystery cries for a shield;

Poems of Aspiration

Then what is the aftermath, judgment or dower,
When earth's little day shall melt into night's hour;
Is it judgment or glory; dismissal or power?

MINE AND THINE

All that I have is little,
But all that I have is Thine;
I know in the blissful future
All that Thou hast is mine.

Perish then all things earthly,
I've treasures unfading still,
And brighter they grow and richer
While doing Thy holy will.

Lord, help me to gather always,
My treasure, not here but there;
So it shall last forever,
And ever shall grow more fair.

A PRAYER

From that high fellowship of love,
Whence Judas by transgression fell,
From heaven's gate to deepest hell,
Thy warning echoes from above.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

"Lord, is it I?" our lips proclaim;
 Could we descend to depths so low,
 Strike at thy heart such deadly blow,
Despise thy grace, insult thy name?

Lurks there within these traitorous hearts
 Such germs of vileness, hate and sin;
 Know we what darkly dwells within;
Know we ourselves, whence evil starts?

O God of mercy, in thy grace,
 Show us ourselves, in danger's power;
 Be with us in each evil hour;
Grant us to gaze upon thy face.

Then seeing thee in love's pure light,
 And our poor selves so prone to ill;
 Bend thou our wills to thy pure will,
And help us love and do the right.

THE COUSHATTA MASSACRE

What are these tidings, coming winged with death,
Of homes invaded in the hush of night?
The very air is tainted with the breath
Of foulest murder and of sudden flight,
Of dark assassin deeds, done out of human sight.

Where the great river pours its mighty flood
Into the bosom of the open sea,
The earth is sullied with the stains of blood,
While those who wrought the deed, unnoticed
flee.
Can Justice hide her face, and let these men go
free?

What can we do—sit still with folded hands,
And hear of brothers murdered far away;
The peaceful home attacked by ruffian bands,
While treason reigns with undisputed sway;
Have we no duty now in such an evil day?

Now is the time if law shall be maintained;
Let us not fall into the self-same snare:
Was it for naught those hard-fought fields were
gained,
And homes made desolate, and hearts laid bare?
They who have won the fight, the fruits of peace
must share.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

But not for us retaliation's deeds:

We know its evil, and we shun its woes;
And while each heart for our loved country bleeds,
Seeing its danger in such deathly throes,
We deal with brothers still, erring but not our foes.

But see, the sun is slowly breaking forth,

The mists and darkness must before it melt;
The South has clasped in brotherhood the North,
From whom too long divided it has dwelt,
The day of Hope shall dawn, and make its presence
felt.

Yes, it is coming, but not yet we fear;

The treasured hate of years has sunk too deep;
The bitter memories are still too near,
Hovering around the graves where loves ones
sleep.

In haste the curse was sown—at leisure we must
reap.

Patience and courage, these we greatly need—

But oh my brothers, what are these alone?
How weak our strength, our word, our every deed;
What power have mortals they can call their
own?

And yet how strong we are, bending before God's
throne.

National and Patriotic

Therefore by Him alone who rules the earth,
Can love and peace bind heart and life again:
He who from chaos gave to order birth,
Can purge our land from all its sin and pain.
Let prayer unceasing rise that Christ supreme may
reign.

COLUMBIA, HAIL

PART I

Columbia, Hail! Thy brows with victory crowned;
Yet not with trumpet blast and martial sound:
No foe lies bruised and bleeding 'neath thy heel;
Thy cities quake not at the clashing steel.
Thy pride is not in glories such as these:
Thy realm the home of liberty and peace!

The Eastern world stands trembling with the
dread,
Fierce war impending o'er each nation's head;
Their mighty armaments massed grimly by,
Watching the chances with a jealous eye;
Like hungry tigers lashed to furious rage,
Yet daring not the first mad war to wage.

A nobler end, a loftier aim be thine,
To wield thy influence as a power benign,
To speed the march of learning o'er the land,
And nourish science with a liberal hand;

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

To raise the lowly, to refine the rude,
Repress the evil, and exalt the good.

From homes where God and truth are early known;
Where hearts are bound to hearts with love alone;
Where fireside comforts shed a glad content;
Let thy blest influence o'er the world be sent.
This is thy strength, thy glory, and thy pride;
Columbia, Hail! Victorious far and wide!

PART 2

Columbia, yet a purer nobler aim
Belongs to thee, and thy historic name;
The glorious memory of Pilgrim days
Must mould that purpose time can not efface.
The pure traditions of the way they led,
Still shed their benedictions on our head.

Learning and science, as they serve their day,
May shine in beauty but to fade away.
Religion only is of God—for aye.

Alas! Columbia, in this day of hope,
Thy sons by thousands, still in darkness grope;
Like weary travelers, wandering in the night,
With down-cast heads, they miss the friendly light.

Far off in regions where few feet have trod,
Thy realm extends—thou holdest it from God.

National and Patriotic

Shall not these regions in the future shine,
Bright homes of earnest millions, sons of thine?

See, in the West, on river, hill and plain,
Fair Eastern cities spring to life again;
And 'round them, as the stars shine 'round the sun,
A hundred little hamlets are begun.
Life strong and earnest—shall it not be blest;
Here hope substantial; there eternal rest?

All through the West, where'er men's feet have
trod,
Are strong temptations to forget our God;
Churches and schools, too sparsely scattered 'round,
While everywhere dark haunts of sin abound.
Aye! men who grudge to pay the gospel cent,
Fling the sin dollar with a grim content.

Stern is the thought: How shall we win this land,
And place this vast domain at God's command?
Blest be the rough-hewn logs, or house of sod;
And blest, thrice blest, the messenger of God.
Hark! 'tis the bell that summons far and wide
The scattered worshipers on mountain side.
And as we nearer draw the song of praise,
Sweet inspiration unto holier days.

Who are the men that make Columbia great?
Who are the men that most exalt the state?
Are they in seats where commerce wins its way?

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Are they where plans of government hold sway?
Are they in halls where learning sheds its ray?
To each we answer truly,—“Yea, and nay.”

Greater than all because made least of all,
The man who simply heard his Master call,
And at His summons made his proudest aim
To win the world to worship that dear Name.
For this each Christian soul pledge heart and hand.
Columbia, hail! be thou Immanuel's land.
If we would keep thee great and free and brave,
Then o'er the Stars and Stripes, the Cross must
wave.

ON THE ARBITRATION TREATY
BETWEEN AMERICA AND
ENGLAND

Flecked with the billows' foam,
Lonely and far from home,
In thy devotion:
Bird of the placid wing,
Tell us the news you bring,
O'er the wild ocean.

Hast thou a story sweet,
Brought from some kind retreat,
Whence strife is banished?
From what domain of air,
Spread thy white pinions fair,
So quickly vanished?

National and Patriotic

Listen! the tempests cease.
Tidings I bring of peace,
 Peace between nations.
Clasping the mother's hands,
The proud young daughter stands,
 Noblest relations.

Never the god of war,
Rules Saxon kindred more;
 Grander the story.
Bird of the stainless wing,
Sweet is the news you bring;
 To God the glory!

THE DEATH OF ROSSEL

They took their way to the Satory camp.
On that bleak November day;
Few were awake to see the sight,
Or to follow the deadly way;
For the thing was done like a guilty deed
That dared not brook delay.

Two were men of the rough hard type,
Who always are easy led
To strike out a bold adventurous course,
Although it be writ blood-red;
They do not shrink from a cruel task
Because of the storms ahead.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Rossel was shaped in a gentler mould,
With his ideals stamped and pure;
Such are the truest of martyr souls,
Fitted to do or endure.
They can not yield to the rage of man;
Their hearts beat firm and sure.

His was the soul to think and plan,
To rule by the power of mind;
To draw all things to the common good,
And every faction bind;
Too pure to lead such a motley crowd,
Through sorrow and pain half blind.

Oh! ye who attacked our hearths and homes,
Who drove us to the fight,
Ours is the pain of a cruel defeat,
And yet our cause was right.
Yours was the victory in that hour,
But only by cursed might.

Firm they stood to receive the shots,
Fired by their comrades' hand.
Men who ne'er flinched in the hottest fight
Shuddered to see them stand,
So calmly erect to meet their death:
And all but them unmanned.

None dared speak in that solemn hour
Of shame or of conscience' smart:

National and Patriotic

They knew there was more in that dauntless mien
Than could come from a traitor's heart.
Hushed with a silent awe they stood,
Till body and soul should part.

Oh! when the Judge of the world shall come,
In the awful judgment day,
Whose shall the blame of that slaughter be?
Aye! who shall the reckoning pay?
For the God of heaven, who watched the deed,
Will not His vengeance stay.

Friends, ye have taken your noble dead,
And laid in the silent tomb;
Oh! ye have wept for that bitter day,
And that cruel uncalled for doom;
But the light will spread, and the dawn soon come
To dispel this awful gloom.

Paris, thou shrine of advancing thought,
How shalt thou lead the world?
Learn by the fate of thy murdered sons
Where thy foes would see thee hurled.
Arise in a nobler might once more,
With a purer flag unfurled.

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Shed no tears o'er his last long sleep,
His soul rests with God above;
And swear no vengeance over his tomb,

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

For he died in his Savior's love;
And that heart like a lion's in the battle's strife,
Had the tenderness of the dove.

Thou hadst the make of a leader of men
In that form and soul and brain.
Had they but left thee pardoned and free,
Thy country's had been the gain;
The nation once more might have stood erect,
Purged from all foreign stain.

One last farewell to the hero brave,
Who died in his manhood's prime;
One lingering glance at his early grave,
And a shuddering thought of that crime.
Yet his was the death that the soldier seeks,
Though it came not in battle time.

Paris! thou bleedest from many a wound,
Dealt thee by foe and friend;
Thou must endure for a little while;
Such suffering must have end.
Then thou shalt rise like a city of men,
And thy hideous shackles rend.

There are higher thoughts for thy sons to know,
By lessons of noblest trust;
By honor and virtue retrieve the past,
Despising malice and lust.
Let no false hopes trail thy banners low
Or drag thy fame in the dust.

National and Patriotic

Forgive the men who have slain thy best,
For he died at peace with all;
But let the lesson of that pure life
Ring out like a bugle call.
We follow on in a noble path,
E'en if like him we fall.

Then cast your flowers over his grave,
Still keeping his memory pure.
And as in our daily paths we tread,
Like his, let our feet stand sure.
He is not dead, for the tale of his life
Shall ever and aye endure.

New York City, 1871.

Anniversary and Special Occasions

FACING THE NEW YEAR

Dim shines the New Year's vision,
Clouded its devious ways,
Winding down roads of promise,
On through the numbered days.

Silent, with timid wonder,
Shading their eyes to see,
Stand we beside the gateway.
What shall the future be?

What are those flitting shadows,
Crossing the road ahead?
What are those whispering voices?
Where is our fancy led?

Hail ye, O distant comrades!
Is it to friend or foe,
Look we amid the shadows,
Promising weal or woe?

Nay, we must travel bravely,
Knowing not doubt or fear.
Forward the path of duty;
No man may linger here.

Anniversary and Special Occasions

Even though frowning danger
Lurks in the thicket's gloom,
Brave hearts will surely conquer:
Dread we no fearful doom.

Onward, one step grows brighter:
That step is all we need.
He who commands the journey
Never has failed to lead.

Phantoms shall turn to comrades;
Shadows shall melt away;
Whispers shall change to anthems;
Night be transformed to day.

Fear not the unknown future:
Evil can ne'er betide
Him who in faith and service
Follows the Crucified.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

Rev. George P. and Mrs. Folsom.

The Master called to His servant,
"Go forth to my fields and toil;
There is precious seed to be scattered,
There is care for the waiting soil."

The servant answered the Master,
"Lord, I am gladly thine.
Show me the place to labor;
Lay thou thy hand on mine."

He paused ere the task beginning;
He thought of the summer heat,
And the storms in the murky distance,
And the tramp of the weary feet.

"Lord, I go forth on thine errand;
But I cannot go alone;
Grant me a kindred spirit,
Whose heart shall be all my own."

And the Master answered gladly,
As He did in the garden grove,
Where Adam and Eve together
Shared in the toil of love;

Anniversary and Special Occasions

"It is not good for the workman
Alone in the fields to sow;
Choose thou thine own companion,
Who also my will may know."

Thank God for the wooing and winning;
Thank God for the happy years.
They sowed and they reaped together;
They mingled their smiles and tears.

And now on this Jubilee evening,
With kindred and friends around,
There is true sweet love and contentment,
With the Father's blessing crowned.

A HAPPY-NEW-YEAR ACROSTIC

A farewell to Christmas. Good-bye the old year.

Herald new joys and the new-found cheer.
A gladsome message of coming days;
Praise to our God, eternal praise.
Promise more loyalty to our King,
Ye who have little of wealth to bring.

Noblest of service from hearts that love,
Echoing notes of the song above.
Welcome the strains of the happy throng.

Yearning for right to banish the wrong.
Earth has no task so sweet to begin
As to help the weak and the wayward win.
Ring out the message of joy within.

EASTER BELLS

Hark! 'Tis the Easter Bells ringing.
What is the message they're bringing,
Blending with chorus of singing?
'Tis the glad voice of the past, greeting the future
in song.
See, on this bright Easter morning,
Angels their pathway adorning.
Scatter sweet blossoms of Springtime.
Softly the anthem prolong.

What are the Easter bells saying,
While in the turrets they're swaying,
Over the multitudes praying,
Seeking for light in the darkness, pleading for life
from the grave?
They echo the words of the Master,—
"Death is no hopeless disaster;
I am the life's resurrection,
Jesus the mighty to save."

Easter Bells, gladly we listen:
Brush back the tear-drops that glisten;

Anniversary and Special Occasions

Christ from death's grasp has arisen;
Scattered the doubt and the darkness, opened the
gates of the morn.
Welcome, O glad Easter Story!
Welcome, O promise of glory!
Heirs of the kingdom of Heaven—
Into new life we are born.

Easter! The heart groweth tender;
Gladly forgives each offender;
Thankful to God let us render
Songs of forgiveness and beauty; flowers of sweet-
ness and love.
Easter! Fair dawn of all brightness!
Soon shall we wake in uprightness,
Soon shall we bask in His sunshine,
Easter, all glorious above.

AN EASTER VISION

I saw the unsightly fledgling put on plumes of blue
and gold and crimson;
And the tight-folded chrysalis emerge with gorgeous, sunny wings,
And the dim, cloudy dawn of a dark morning turn
to midday glory,
And the bare canvas, under artist touch, shine forth
with life and hope;
And the rough block of marble chiseled into beautiful form and feature,
And crude prairie soil become a garden, decked
with fruits and flowers.
And earth from winter's sleep awake to springtime
song and spring-time joy.
And then I said: "How sweet; but sweeter still as
types of nobler things."
For life is fledgling, chrysalis, dawn, crude soil,
marble, winter, canvas;
And the soul that has seen God is best of all, as
likeliest God himself.

Songs of the Better Land

THERE AND HERE

A far off land. Not so it seems to me,
That glorious city with the streets of gold;
In day dreams oft, the pearly gates divide,
And to the eye of faith bright scenes unfold.

There in the region where night cannot reign,
And flowers unfading bloom the livelong year,
Down the long avenues I seem to view
Familiar forms of those long cherished here.

Many a comrade, who mid doubt and storm
Battled his way till death brought welcome rest,
Now sees the purpose of such painful strife,
And dwells in peace a loved and honored guest.

The same; but yet how changed, the care has fled,
No more they bear the print of battle scars,
No more loved forms toil under weary loads;
No burdens mar the life beyond the stars.

No more sin's conflict marks its wearing lines,
On faces purified from earthly strain;
No longer disappointment chills the heart,
Nor linger traces of a lifelong pain.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

'Tis rest and yet not idleness I see,
Each soul is busy at some blessed toil:
How the eyes glisten! How the footsteps bound
By the calm river on celestial soil.

O envied ones! In haste I stretch my hands,
Familiar forms with loving clasp to greet;
But they regard not. Can no thoughts of earth,
Enter the converse of the golden street?

Can it be fancy? Hark! I seem to hear
A message wafted from those mansions blest,
"Work on for there are other souls to win,
Ere thou canst enter thine eternal rest.

"Those who are wise to win lost souls from sin,
And point the way to heavenly joy and peace;
From God's own hand receive the fadeless crown,
And shine like stars with light that cannot cease."

The vision fades, and life with daily toil,
No longer painful, calls to duties here;
Refreshed and strengthened by that passing word,
Sent by the dwellers in that purer sphere.

Patient we'll wait, glad that in that bright land
There are so many loved ones gone before,
Thankful to be allowed to work and watch,
Till the light beckons to the heavenly shore.

THE VISION OF THE GATE

I saw a vision of the Gate,
A crowd of pilgrims young and old
Enter the portals pearl and gold;
They do not crowd, yet none need wait;
And none need haste, for none are late.
But as they enter, all of earth,
That had no true immortal worth
Falls off, and in celestial birth
They wear new forms, new, yet not new,
Old features are not lost to view;
But pain, and wrinkle, stain and spot
All disappear and are forgot.
The crouching form no longer stoops;
The lowly head no longer droops:
A strange light fills the longing eyes;
What ecstasy, what glad surprise!
Are they transformed by seraph wand?
Or is one glimpse of scenes beyond
Enough to change each earthborn soul,
To make the heavy laden whole,
Enough to fill with gleaming light
Each eye that sees the wondrous sight?
Have you not in some happy dream
Entered with them the golden gate,
At which the joyous angels wait,
Drunk of that never failing stream,
Where no sun shines but all is bright,
Have you not stood and bathed in light?

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

For one brief moment Paradise
Was yours; and did not that suffice
In after days of doubt and fear,
To tell you heaven is always near?
Has not that vision of the gate
Cheered many a weary, aching heart,
Compelled to linger on apart,
To wait alone and always wait?
Yet not alone for that blessed sight
Has made life's dreary pathway light.
Then tell that vision where you go,
Whisper it softly; let men know,
Amid the sorrow and the woe,
That earth is brief and Heaven abides
Not like this world of ebbing tides.
Tell them how want and age and pain,
And each infirmity and stain
Are left behind them at the gate,
Which none need miss, where none need wait,
But tell them who may enter there,
Who may enjoy that vision fair.

Not afar off with Dives' eye,
Where hell's dark torments hidden lie,
But who may enter and rejoice,
Those who have made His paths their choice,
Who in His righteousness abide,
And in the Rock of Ages hide,
When storms of sin sweep far and wide.
Those who will work, and wait, and pray,
And watch for Him until He say:

Songs of the Better Land

"Your work is done; I lead the way:
Enter with Me the realms of day."
Follow Him, brother, do not wait,
Lest it be said to you: "Too late."
Ponder the vision of the gate.

GOD'S HOUR

Oh God, hast Thou forgot man's weal or woe?
Or have we sinned too deeply for Thy thought?
Are these foul deeds, by man's invention
wrought,
Blotting Thy vision—mingling friend with foe?

Our vast iniquities insult Thy grace.
Our brutal follies dare Thy holy will.
In our fierce enmity, we hate, we kill;
We flaunt our shame e'en in Thy very face.

No hand but Thine, oh Lord, can end this fight;
No love but Thine can melt these hearts of
stone.
Wicked we are, but leave us not alone;
The world, in hopeless darkness, cries for light.

Is Thine arm shortened that it can not save;
While man defiant crieth,—"God is dead."
The fields once living green are running red,
Gardens of beauty now a ghostly grave.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Oh God, in pity, manifest Thy power;
 Turn hearts of hate to hearts of tender love.
 No help on earth. Oh send it from above.
We wait, we cry in anguish for God's hour.

VIA CRUCIS

Deeper and darker the shadows grew,
 In the life of the Lord of Love;
The friends of his soul were cowed and few;
 The stars hid their light above.

The cross loomed dark on the sorrowing way;
 The burden more sharp and sore.
Foes plotted by night; Friends caviled by day;
 And the road wound more and more.

The way of the cross meant our soul's new life;
 And the joy bade the anguish cease;
The road leads up through the plains of strife,
 But it ends in the realms of peace.

WORK, FOR THE DAY IS BREAKING

Work, for the day is breaking;
Work, for the night is past;
Work, for the Church is waking;
Shadows are fleeting fast.
Work in this glad new morning,
Morning of cheer in strife,
Peril and danger scorning,
Wake in the power of life.

Work, for the Master calleth,
Calleth and leads the way;
Vanish the fear that palleth,
Welcome the brighter day.
Gladly his name confessing,
Joining the saints above;
Service so rich in blessing,
Service of life and love.

Work, for that day draws nearer,
Day when the victor's song
Rings, as the sight grows clearer,
Visions of banished wrong.
Soon in his holy keeping
Cometh the welcome word.
All the redeemed are reaping
Sheaves for their blessed Lord.

MY WORK; HIS TIME

Might I but choose the time of my departure,
I would not dare.
I am content through days and years to labor,
Under his care.

I will not try to think my work completed,
Or incomplete.
Enough 'twill be to lay it in its weakness,
At his dear feet.

There may be plans that I should like to finish,
If 'twere his will.
But I might spoil the value of surrender,
By working still.

He surely will not call until his fullness
Of time to bless.
And then what better close of earthly labor
Than just say "Yes."

A part, a faithful part of God's great kingdom,
We do our best.
And then the bliss of that unerring summons:
"Come home and rest."

RELIGION

Religion's believing;
The faith that lives;
A joyful receiving
The gift He gives.

Religion is knowing
The Saviour's call;
And grows in bestowing
His grace to all.

Religion is hating
The paths of sin;
Impatiently waiting
Till right shall win.

Religion is fighting
Along the road;
And shares in the lighting
Man's heavy load.

Religion is steady
In stress and strain;
With heart ever ready
For toil or pain.

Religion ne'er falters
When foes are rife;

Nor wilfully alters
God's plan of life.

Religion obtaineth
Its way through love.
"The rest that remaineth"
Is found above.

Religion endureth
When time shall cease.
Through grace it secureth
God's rest and peace.

THE ISLE OF REST

Far, far off into dreamland
Drifted my bark one day;
Blue were the skies above me,
Light was the dashing spray.

Then beached on a tiny island,
Lapped by the ocean's wave,
I climbed to the rocks above me,
Safe in a sheltered cave.

And the world of warfare vanished,
And a peace like the calm of night
Stole silently down and clasped me
In the gentleness of its might.

Songs of the Better Land

Oh, sweet the power of forgetting
The clash of a world of strife!
Oh, sweeter the glad remembering
The glory and bliss in life!

If we could but drift into dreamland
When the world seems harsh and cold;
If we could but find a renewing
When our hopes are growing old!

We could come back more contented
To the fevered rush of the mart;
We could bear more sweetly the burdens
Of a weary, longing heart.

We might learn such restful drifting
If our souls were tuned aright;
We might find these nooks for resting
If our hearts dwelt more in the light.

When the storms of life are ended,
When our boat is moored for aye
On the tideless shores of the home land,
Where night ne'er robs the day,

We shall look back over the ocean
Which no sunset ever mars,
Safe moored in the peaceful haven,
In the land beyond the stars.

THERE IS NO STARLESS SKY

There is no night, however dark and gloomy,
But one star gleams.
There is no age so hopeless in its evil,
But glory beams.

When this old world, in dark and fierce rebellion,
Sinks into night,
Across the heavens shines the sweet reflection
Of coming light.

When lust and crime seem dragging in their path-
way
The hopes of men,
A voice, majestic, tender, wakes the echoes
To hope again.

This world is God's, and he will rule and guide it
From heights above.
He, in his might, still reigns beyond men's weak-
ness,
In sleepless love.

Oh heart, despair not, though the conflict deepens,
Thou must endure:
Sink not upon the field, forlorn and hopeless;
The end is sure.

Songs of the Better Land

The darkness passes; clouds are rent asunder;
The morning breaks.
Sin, long the victor, hides in dire confusion:
Heaven's song awakes.

LET US FORGET

Old friend of mine, when I must cross the sea,
Stand on the shore and wave a kind good-bye.
At times the way seems lonesome to my view,
So well I love the friends and scenes more nigh.

Not that I fear the journey o'er the wave;
Not that I dread that shipwreck me betides;
Not mine the skill that steers my trackless way;
Sure is the harbor since the Captain guides.

But just that human clinging to a friend;
Just that calm joy in clasping earthly hands;
That sweet communion earth with all its faults
Gives us so richly when it understands.

"Better," you say, "the land to which we go;
Choicer the souls now purged from earthly stains;
Sweeter the toil with weariness no more;
Fuller of harmony the heavenly strains."

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

But earth is dear, its links of love hold fast;
We know the present, but the future life
Often seems misty, for our faith is dim;
We have not learned the bliss of ended strife.

Can it be wrong to love this earth so well?
Kindly it treats us, e'en through darksome days
Light conquers darkness, lifts o'ershadowing gloom;
Cheer comes to brighten all the devious ways.

Was there no bitterness to spoil the cup?
No harsh estrangement proving friendship's
blight?
Let us forget, and only see that life,
Both here and there, is full of joy and light.

Narrative and Descriptive

JESUS AND PETER

John 13:6; 6:67; Matt. 14:31; John 21:15

A solemn scene, ere he returned above,
Christ teaching men his truth in symbols meet,
The lesson of humility and love,
As, bending by their side, he washed their feet.
Then Peter cried, unconscious what should be,
"Lavest thou me, O Lord? It may not be."

He had forgotten days, long past and dim,
When fickle multitudes were turning back;
How the dear Lord, in sadness turned to him
And his companions, feeling not their lack;
And said to him and them, their hearts to lead,
"Leavest thou me, my friend, in my sore need?"

He had forgotten, too, that wondrous day,
When on the Sea of Galilee he spied
That blessed form upon the billowy way,
Walking as calmly as on mountain side;
And how he, failing, grasped the Saviour's hand.
"Livest thou in me?" said Christ, "then thou
shalt stand."

Yet once again upon that holy shore
Christ stood with Peter, in his risen might;

Sending him forth to gain the world once more
To truth and purity and gospel light;
And said to him with pathos wondrous deep,
"Lovest thou me? Then feed my lambs and
sheep."

THE MODERN SKY-SCRAPER

They builded their mighty Babel, those sturdy
builders of old;
Defying the God of heaven, with a hardihood,
strangely bold.
They piled up their bricks and mortar; they aimed
for the very skies;
And the stars looked down and watched them, and
the heavens in still surprise.
They builded as for the ages, a sky-aimed ladder
made fast;
They never dreamed of judgment, those men of
the mighty past.
But the God of heaven beheld them; He smiled at
their futile plan;
He would not o'erturn in anger the scaffolding
raised by man.
But a spell came over the builders, their speech con-
fusion and shame,
And the mighty tower of their Babel is now but a
warning name.
There has risen a new race of builders; with brawn
o'ertopped by brain;

Narrative and Descriptive

And have they forgot the lesson once learned under
awful strain?

They seem to defy God's power: they seem to
ignore His claim;

Till the Lord of the earth and heaven is only an
ancient name.

With stone, and with steel, and with concrete, they
climb o'er the highest spire.

The church must make way for Mammon, his wor-
ship drowns out the choir.

Some may bow in a splendid temple in the quiet of
a Sabbath day;

But the multitude pass unheeding, on a thought-
less, selfish way.

The only temples of worship for them are these
storied piles;

Where the God of love is forgotten; and self-com-
placence smiles.

Oh ye modern Babel builders, whose selfishness cries
aloud;

His power may confound your language; and scat-
ter your noisy crowd.

For when earthly temples crumble, those temples
that stand alone

Are the hearts and the lives surrendered, for the
Holy Spirit's throne.

BOAZ AND JACHIN

I Kings 7:15-22

There stood at the eastern porch of the noblest
temple of time
Two pillars of lofty height, standing erect, sub-
lime.
On the left was Boaz, or Strength, the strength of
the Mighty Lord;
On the right was Jachin, Established, resting upon
His word.
Eighteen cubits in height, fashioned with wondrous
skill,
For the Lord had given the builder wisdom beyond
man's will.
And crowning these pillars grand were capitals
strangely wrought,
With lily, pomegranate and network, into God's
service brought.
The lily of modest demeanor, humble and sweet
and pure,
The network that tells of labor, all intertwined
and sure;
And the sweet pomegranate shining, with beautiful
sun-kissed cheek,
Hiding its wealth of fragrance from those who will
thoughtless seek.
Not for the Jewish people to gaze on and love
alone,

Were those pillars of grace and beauty on which
God's glory shone;
But down through the passing ages we hear the
message borne,
That life, while strong for conflict, and looking
forth to the morn,
Must wear the sweet persuasion of modesty and
grace,
That men may see in the Christian the light of the
Master's face.
Oh, Master, if we are pillars, to stand in thy porch
of praise,
May we be clothed in the beauty that lives through
the endless days;
We would be lily-hearted; we would join hands to
bless;
And so would reflect the glory of the Sun of
Righteousness.

THE FORGOTTEN ANGELS

Have we banished the angels; have we forgotten
them all;
That strange and beautiful story, from Adam's
tragic fall?
Shall we gaze upon the brightness of that flaming
sword once more,
Which flashed the doom of banishment and barred
up Eden's door?

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Shall we ever see in glory that rescuing angel form,
Who led that ransomed family from Sodom's awful
storm?

Or that destroying angel, who weeping as he bent,
Wrote death on Egypt's portals. That joy with
sorrow blent.

We think of that bright chariot, and angel
charioteer,
Who sped the prophet homeward, from blessed
sphere to sphere:

And then of that strong angel, who in the Persian
den,
Held firm the hungry lions, and crueller might of
men.

What is the blest employment of that angelic host,
Who on Samaria's hillsides defied a monarch's
boast?

Then joy, great joy awakens, in memory of that
hour,
When angel hosts sang, "Glory, and peace on earth,
and power."

Then hushed our thoughts in silence, in dark
Gethsemane,
In memory of that angel bowed in tenderest
sympathy.

We may forget the angels—the world has grown
so old,

Narrative and Descriptive

That sometimes heaven is banished, and love and
joy grown cold.

But the children are much wiser; they hear the
angel's voice;
And in the light of heaven, with angel hosts rejoice.

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE
THOUSAND

Matt. 14:19

It was a royal banquet,
A prince stood at the head;
The hand that ruled the universe
Distributed the bread.

And who the kind attendants,
As the groups expectant lay?
They who shall judge the kings of earth,
In the resurrection day.

No couch of human forming,
For the feasters to recline;
But soft green grass in early spring,
Upholstery divine.

Above their heads no canopy,
Of silk or velvet spread;

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

The bright blue sky in waning light
Stretched lovingly o'erhead.

No lofty burning tapers
Shed radiance o'er the board;
The golden rays of setting sun,
And smile of heaven's Lord.

For music what shall greet them?
Not earth's trained minstrelsy;
The low sweet murmur of the waves,
On the Lake of Galilee.

Soft fall the shades of evening,
As the multitudes depart;
The bread of life from life's own Lord
Has fed each hungry heart.

O, richly royal banquet!
O, blessed hearts of yore,
Who took from Christ's own hands the food
On the Galilean shore.

O weary heavy laden,
By grief and sin distressed!
You've found His love, the Christ of God,
Life's everlasting rest.

HE STOOD—WITH A PLUMB-LINE

Over Jerusalem's ramparts
Tekoa's herdsman saw
The shadow of God's almighty hand,
With the symbol of perfect law;
His right hand upheld the plumb-line,
Which measures each break and flaw.

See how he measures the nation—
The priests, the prophets, the kings;
Where is the grand uprightness
Of which the poet sings?
Where the simple, truthful living—
The holy imaginings?

He measures each law and tradition,
Each custom of home and store;
Each habit of field and vineyard,
Each dweller on mount and shore—
That true, unwavering plumb-line
Searches each heart to the core.

But is Jerusalem only
Thus tried by the Lord's plumb-line?
Will it find no flaws and bendings
In your life, my brother, and mine?
Is it strange that man should tremble
Under this test divine?

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

He tries our civilization,
Our boasted customs and laws;
He tries all our institutions
By a test that reveals all flaws:
That shows not only the evils,
But unmasks the vital cause.

Will our churches bear the plumb-line?
Are they liberal, pure and true?
Are you giving that love to others
Which the Lord has given to you?
Will my life stand the test that tries me,
And searches me through and through?

Ah! but not nations and churches
Alone must endure the test.
Am I, and are you, my brother,
Giving God our very best?
Is our chief desire and longing
That other's through us be blest?

O searching and awful plumb-line,
In Thy hand, O God of might!
Will no one come to the rescue,
And make us, like Thee, upright?
Is there no fountain of cleansing,
Where our souls may be made white?

Yes! for the God of the plumb-line,
The God of the awful test,

Narrative and Descriptive

Is the God who pities and saves us—
The Father who loves us best;
Who removes all our dark transgressions
Far as the east from the west.

MUSIC THE ETERNAL AND UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

In an English parlor, from far and near,
Were gathered one eve by the firelight's glow,
Singers and thinkers, artists and poets,
For converse that only true souls can know.

Rubinstein, master in music's realm,
In broken speech to George Eliot spake,
While tender Rossetti dreamily sat,
Seeing bright visions, her soul awake.

Rubinstein halted, a larger thought
Than he could utter in English speech
Forced him to silence, painful, intense;
The words that he wanted, how should he reach?

Suddenly starting, with flashing eye,
He said: "Ah, listen, I tell the whole."
And sweeping his fingers over the keys,
He breathed forth the burning thoughts of his
soul.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

She could interpret that language sweet
Of the other world that is ours always;
Her fingers answered the player's thoughts,
Hearts comprehend the message she plays.

And then from out that converse of soul,
Where not one word was spoken or sung,
Browning, true poet, gave the world
"Apt Vogler," thought found human tongue.

German or English, it matters not,
The soul in music can find a voice.
The true heart answers the thrilling chords;
And well may the sons of men rejoice.

When the morning stars together sang,
For a world, new born from the heaven's vast,
Th' unconscious earth in its beauty beamed
With the reign of silence forever past.

In the world to come, when art is not
Nor painting, nor sculpture, nor builder's skill;
Are the links all severed, that tied to earth,
Is there nothing human that lingers still?

Here we grope dimly, and minor chords
Sadden and darken the hope within,
We welcome the promise of larger life,
Of a world where music the crown shall win.

Narrative and Descriptive

A common language, a common thought,
Breathe in communion of choirs above.
There music divine and human blend,
Eternal and universal love.

WHERE IS THE HELMSMAN?

The night is dark, and the ship is drifting,
And the helm sways aimlessly.
No captain steers for the distant haven;
No star, no moon they see.

Hark! 'Tis the wind's wail, sternly sounding;
And far off a dismal roar.
Is it the murmur of fatal breakers,
On some cruel unknown shore?

Alas for the ship without a helmsman!
Alas for the hopeless crew!
'Tis danger, dark impending danger,
And no relief in view.

Stay! for in silence, calm and peaceful,
Like dawn on a darkness drear,
There comes a presence, strong inspiring,
And bids farewell to fear.

A pilot comes in mystic answer
To prayers half dumb with pain.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

He takes the helm with hands of power;
The ship responds again.

O, weary soul on life's hard voyage,
Drifting like ship bereft;
Are you bound for the cruel rocks and quicksands,
With no kind prospect left?

Ah, but your straits are the Lord's own choosing.
Trust Him, and all is well.
Let the waves sweep, and the winds howl madly;
He knows the billows' swell.

Trust Him, His hand will never falter;
His love is strong as life.
Straight to the haven He guides your journey,
Far from the stress and strife.

Why, oh my brother, should we be drifting,
When life has perils unknown?
Make Him the Pilot; trust Him supremely.
He safely guides His own.

Hymns

DEDICATION HYMN

Tune, "Retreat"

Our Father, God, on Thee we wait,
In songs of joy our voices raise;
With thankful hearts we dedicate
This earthly temple to Thy praise.

Here may the children learn of Thee;
The hungry feed on bread divine;
The tempted find new strength, and see
The light of heaven upon them shine.

Here may the cross, uplifted, meet
The sinner's gaze, in tender love;
Thy children in communion sweet,
Find foretaste of the bliss above.

Make us more Christ-like; may we learn
The joy of lives all given to Thee;
Meet with us while our hearts all burn
To spread Thy truth from sea to sea.—Amen.

FOR THOSE AWAY FROM HOME

Standing forth on life's rough way,
 Father, guide them;
O! we know not what of harm
 May betide them;
'Neath the shadow of Thy wing,
 Father, hide them;
Waking, sleeping, Lord, we pray,
 Go beside them.

When in prayer they cry to Thee,
 Thou wilt hear them;
From the stains of sin and shame
 Thou wilt clear them;
'Mid the quicksands and the rocks
 Thou wilt steer them;
In temptation, trial, grief,
 Be Thou near them.

Unto Thee we give them up,
 Lord, receive them;
In the world we know must be
 Much to grieve them;
Many striving oft and strong
 To deceive them;
Trustful, in Thy hands of love
 We must leave them.

RECESSIONAL

To Thee, O God, with lifted eye,
And hope and trust we turn our gaze;
Thine is the glory, grand and high,
'Tis ours to offer joyous praise.
O God, our Father, we are Thine,
To bear Thine image, half divine.

Thy hand, through earth's dark toilsome roads,
Has guarded kindly, day by day;
When tottering under painful loads,
Thy touch has brightened all the way.
We know Thy love, our hearts are Thine,
To render homage more divine.

When earth, with conflicts fierce and long,
Would turn our thoughts to din and strife,
We upward look, Thy grace is strong,
Thy love our joy, Thy strength our life.
One glance O God, one glance of Thine,
Makes life for man seem half divine.

And when the night of death draws near,
And fades the light of earth away,
In that dark valley comes no fear,
Thou art our light, with Thee 'tis day.
We place our hands, O God, in Thine,
Entering the gate of life divine.

HYMN OF DEVOTION

Lord, come Thou near to me;
My soul still waits on Thee,
 Won by Thy grace,
Reveal Thy saving love;
Let me thy goodness prove;
Point me to joys above;
 Show me Thy face.

All that is wrong in me,
All that is strong in Thee,
 Lord I would know.
So shall my boasting flee;
So shall I holy be;
Growing more like to Thee,
 Through joy and woe,

Then when the battle's done,
When the last victory's won,
 Thine be the praise.
Since Thou hast died for me,
This is my constant plea,
Grant me to live with Thee
 Through endless days.

Hymns

LORD OF THE HARVEST

Lord of the harvest, hear us;
We lift our souls to Thee.
Accept our thankful worship
For gifts so full and free.

Thine are the earth's rich treasures,
The bounties of the field.
Our hearts in earnest worship
Most thankfully we yield.

Grant that our loving service
May show from day to day
In hearts and lives that honor
The Life, the Truth, the Way.

Y. P. S. C. E. CONSECRATION HYMN

From "Hymns of Christian Endeavor," No. 94.

Tune, "Bethany."

Master, we hear thy call,
Gladly we meet;
Bending in earnest prayer
Low at thy feet;
Melted by thy great love,
Lifting our souls above,
Learning from thee to prove
Life's service sweet.

Gladly we own thy claim—
Thine, thine alone,
Thou in almighty love
Stooped from thy throne.
Thankful thy name we bear;
Help us for thee to dare;
Help us thy cross to share—
We are thine own.

Lord, we would gladly give
Youth's morning bright;
Love's true endeavor spent,
Speeding the right;
Offering our youth to-day,
Take it, O! God, we pray;
Guide us in thine own way—
In truth and light.

NEARER TO THEE

Nearer my God to thee,
Nearer to thee;
Nearer to me I know
Thou canst not be;
For thine almighty love,
Continually,
Hovers around my soul,
Constraining me.

Nearer my God to thee,
Nearer to thee;
Sometimes with heart weighed down,
Cometh my plea;
Sometimes with lifted head,
Dark shadows flee,
And near I know thou art,
Dear Lord, to me.

Nearer my God to thee,
Life's end I see;
Soon will forever fade
Uncertainty;
Then close by thy loved side,
Eternally,
I need no longer pray,
Nearer to thee.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Gladly to Thy courts we bring
Hearts of love that worship Thee;
Joyously Thy praises sing,
Hymns of faith ascending free;
Songs that rise with hope and love
To our Father's throne above.

Earthly light but dimly burns,
Measured by the light divine;
Earthly love but coldly spurns,
Measured by that love of Thine.
Thou who art by us adored,
Thou art Love itself, O Lord!

We, Thy children, glad to learn
Blessed truths that Thou canst teach,
Pray for thoughts that thrill and burn,
Grant Thy blessing unto each;
May Thy fulness fill each soul;
May Thy goodness make us whole.

Kindle, Lord, by Thine own grace
Love that worships, love that toils;
Cleanse us from all evil ways,
All that grieves and all that soils;
In Thy pure unfading light,
May we love and do the right.

HYMN FOR COMMENCEMENT OF
SERVICE

Lord of Hosts, to Thee we come,
Joyfully our songs we raise;
Gifts we bring of loving hearts,
Offerings of grateful praise.

For Thy kindly guiding care,
For the blessings of Thy love,
For the light of gospel truth,
For the hope of joys above.

Full of sin and earthly stain,
Full of want and human woe,
Yet we plead redeeming love;
Blessed Lord, Thy mercy show.

Humbly bending at Thy throne,
Earnest prayers to Thee ascend;
Grant Thy Spirit's cheering light;
Be our Saviour, Guide and Friend.

Send us peace and sacred joy,
Warm our hearts with holy love,
Help us with one voice to sing,
Glory be to God above.

“COME UNTO ME”

“Come unto Me:” It is the Saviour calling;
“Lay down your sins, and take My pardon free.
O restless soul, so weary, heavy-laden,
I am thy refuge, come thou unto Me.

“Come unto Me. Art thou not sick of waiting?
Conflicts and fears have torn thy aching soul:
There is no rest for eyes that see no heaven;
There is no joy till Jesus makes thee whole.

“Come unto Me. That I might guide thee home-
ward
I left My home, close by My Father’s side;
I bore the pangs that gathered round My pathway:
I lived for men, and for their ransom died.

“Come unto Me. This earth can ne’er console thee,
Thy heart was made to know a Saviour’s love.
Amid the toil and striving of the earth-life
Must come the yearning for the life above.

“Come unto Me. Love conquers even sinning,
My grace sufficient wins the hardest fight.
Lay down thy burdens, take thy full salvation;
Follow My leading into perfect light.”

Miscellaneous

LYNCH LAW

The gallop of horse—a band of men
Boldly and quickly ride,
Silent and grim like the shades of Death,
Who follows with rapid stride.

Valley and hill are left behind,
And now in dust and heat,
Masked and hidden, the horsemen come
Into the lonely street.

In front of them rise the prison walls
Dark, in the gloom of night,
Fiercely they clamor for open doors,
Their only passport—might.

.

The rattle of hoofs, a cloud of dust,
While the wakened townsmen gaze;
Down the road, and over the bridge,
The horsemen ride apace.

Only a mile they hold their way
Till 'neath the forest gloom;
The "Halt" rings forth from the leader's lips,
And now—the prisoner's doom.

.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Nature was hushed, and the wild birds slept
Soft in each little nest;
Tenderly sweet sang the sighing wind,
Whispering peace and rest.

Eagerly listened the folks hard by,
Listened beneath their breath;
For to them the voice of the wind sighed forth
The solemn tones of death.

Hark! On the ear there harshly falls
A dismal, horrid sound:
Bang!—bang!—bang!—so many hearts,
Dying or dead on the ground.

So many pieces of lifeless clay
Stretched on the clammy sod;
So many souls dying in sin,
With scarce one cry to God.

Sinners they were, and sinned against,
How can we judge aright?
Man is usurping the place of God,
Right is dethroned by might.

The Law slept sound as the deed was done;
Justice had taken wing;
Terror and Hate held carnival,
And Death was the ghostly king.

Miscellaneous

Unhappy state, so lovely still,
So fallen; yet O so fair!
The wind was sown, and these whirlwind crops,
Your harvesters must bear.

This must not be. Law shall prevail.
Justice, stand forth in might;
E'en out of evil, let good spring forth;
And darkness yield to light.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

(It may be remembered that the poet Whittier was born and spent most of his life on a farm near Haverhill, Mass., on the Merrimack River, about fourteen miles in a direct line from the Atlantic Ocean, whose roar he often heard in the evenings. Much inspiration came to him as he heard the ocean in the distance. The following lines are suggested by that thought.)

It is still, still evening, the stars shine clear;
The toilers rest from the day's hard toil,
On the crested hills and the fragrant soil
There is perfect peace for the listening ear.

Listen! There comes from the distant shore
The welcome sound of the evening song,
Nature's pure lullaby, grand and strong,
Borne on the breezes, the ocean's roar.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

The poet listened, his soul alive;
For the grand old organ, so far away
Had stirred his heart for the coming fray
To cast his lot with the men that strive.

"Freedom," the ocean's billows sang.
"Freedom for all," the poet replied.
Here on the soil where patriots died,
The forests old with the anthem rang.

Dear old Quaker, thy voice is stilled;
The work is done for which men bled;
Black and colored, tawny or red
Are free to-day as the Father willed.

On the Haverhill farm was that life begun,
Where the Merrimack River flowed content.
Thy noble life for the world was spent;
And thy rest is sweet for thy crown is won.

AT THE GRAVE OF A DEAR FRIEND

Farewell, beloved; sweet and pure thy rest.
For me the loneliness. Thy lot most blest.
Fanned by the breezes, nature's kindly song;
Thy sleep how tranquil; thy calm rest how long.
Far from the murmurs of the thoughtless crowd,
Where God speaks low, and selfish man speaks loud;

Miscellaneous

Where stern and harsh, men fight their way to
power,

'Mid the ambitions of a passing hour.
Promptings eternal quickly disappear,
And voices holy find no listening ear.
Hushed, selfish conflict; ended now the strife;
All dark uncertainty linked to earthly life.
Thou in a sleep, calmer than infant knows,
No dream of terror marring thy repose;
Waiting that moment when archangels' call
Sounds all resistless summons to us all.
Mine still the conflict; mine the daily task,
Thine the sweet restfulness angels may not ask.
Mine, problems puzzling, burdens pressing sore;
Thine, doubts all settled, every conflict o'er.
Yet envy dwells not; soon the dawning day;
Then glad reunion, and the bliss for aye.

ONE THING I KNOW; I WAS BLIND,
NOW I SEE

How can it be, thou poor, confiding soul,
That God should bend to hear thy humble prayer?
Think you His power can make the planets roll,
Yet condescends to soothe thy heart of care?
All nature follows laws unchanging still,
And cannot heed thy pleadings or thy will.

I know not, friend, just how to answer thee,
But this: I once was blind and now I see.

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Do you not know, O fond deluded one,
That men have banished God from nature's plan:
They now proclaim that earth, and star, and sun,
Are self-evolved; and so are beast and man.
Nature now simply means the reign of laws,
And deeply hid in life its own first cause.

I am not troubled, friend, to answer thee;
I know I once was blind, but now I see.

O blind delusion, man! thou does but praise
The great unknowable, a phantom dream.
Science is Gospel in these latter days,
And man's own glory is his noblest theme.
He may or may not live beyond the earth;
The limits of man's ken are death and birth.

Still, friend, no better answer comes to me
Than this: I once was blind, but now I see.

Yet stop: fools sometimes know when wise men fail:
Babes sometimes grasp what sages ne'er divine;
The weak and simple may sometimes prevail,
Though science and philosophy are thine.
When death shall lay on thee his icy hand,
Will all thy wisdom that dark hour withstand?
Do Nature's laws unfailing comfort give?
Have you no hope beyond the grave to live?
Beyond this life a home is kept for me,
And I who here was blind, my God shall see.
Then skeptic say, What shall become of thee?

RETROSPECT

If I had to live life over again,
Should I find it more worth living?
Should I find any smoother, straighter roads,
Or men any more forgiving?

If I were a boy at school again,
Would the old plays be as jolly?
Could I learn and forget with old-time glee,
And less of the old-time folly?

As I grew to man's estates and cares,
Would I shun the former blunders?
Would I steer my way past the rocks and snags?
How often one stops—and wonders!

Should I tell the same old story again,
In the same or another's hearing?
Would she still say yes! or would it be no?
My heart beats quick at the fearing.

Oh! who would dare to live over again,
Past years of joy and sorrow?
Or who would desire with prophetic eyes,
To read the tale of to-morrow?

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Nay! man can be never a boy again,
With the eager, earnest longing;
The upward look and the earnest stride,
Where the multitude is thronging.

Far better to climb from what has been,
To bolder, grander endeavor;
While we bury the dead of joy or woe,
In memory's grave forever.

LOST PEARLS

I lost some pearls on the King's highway,
Some pearls of life and cheer.
They fell while I watched the passing throng;
I must seek them far and near.

I lost the pearl of a simple faith,
As I walked with Doubt one day.
My eyes were turned from their upward gaze,
And I half forgot to pray.

I lost the pearl of a joyful hope
As I listened to Despair;
And the world grew dark with a somber cloud,
And I brooded long on care.

Miscellaneous

I lost the pearl of a blessed love
As I let self reign supreme;
And the cheery word and the kindly deed
Passed like a waking dream.

They were lost full long, and I missed them sore.
I felt most poor and sad.
And I could not sing with the men who sang,
Nor toil with the toilers glad.

But I have found my pearls again;
They were still on the King's highway.
I looked above, and I caught the gleam
Of the love that lives for aye.

The pearl of faith I found where it fell,
For Doubt had fled afar;
And I looked above where the smile of God
Shone bright as a holy star.

I found my pearl of vanished hope
In the strength of a higher will;
And the voice I heard in the evening calm
Just whispered, "Peace, be still."

I found my pearl of love once more,
As, forgetting things my own,
I tenderly cared for God's little ones
Who tread the rough way alone.

I have found my pearls: I will keep them all,
Still walking the King's highway.
And faith grows bright, and hope grows clear,
And love, to the perfect day.

WHAT IS LIFE?

What is life? 'Tis a vapor,
That silently fades away;
A shadow; a recollection;
An echo; a hollow play.

What is life? 'Tis a poem;
A breath of another life;
A song from a world of music;
Or whisper of coming strife.

What is life? 'Tis a battle,
In which wrong oft prevails,
And right stands weak and stricken,
And noblest effort fails.

What is life? 'Tis an ocean,
Stretching from shore to shore,
Where the sunken wrecks of the present
Can float on the tide no more.

What is life? 'Tis a river,
Where 'tis easy to drift and glide;

Miscellaneous

But rare are the faithful oarsmen
Who are pulling against the tide.

What is life? 'Tis a voyage,
O'er many a stormy wave,
Rent sails and shipwrecked sailors,
And the lonely, unknown grave.

What is life? 'Tis a volume,
Noble, or black with sin;
A story of holy purpose.
Or in which dark passions win.

What is life? 'Tis a stewardship,
A trust from the King of Kings,
Filled with the stern requirements,
Of solemn and holy things.

What is life? 'Tis a moment,
While preparing here below,
For the long eternal ages,
Of happiness or woe.

Life—ah, what awful meaning!
No word more grand than this!
'Tis the dirge of a spirit's ruin,
Or the anthem of endless bliss.

THE POWER OF THE PEN

In deepest plot for good and evil,
Were planning angel mind and devil
A weapon, big with fate for men.
They made their plans, compared, and then,
From glorious height and darkest den
Brought the same weapon, just a pen.

YOUTH HAS GONE BY

Youth has gone by. 'Tis better so;
It did its work; it had its day.
It could not, would not always stay.
It left its trace; it had to grow.

Its failures; they were not in vain;
They taught the wiser, better road.
They had their use in that they showed
That man must grow through toil and pain.

Youth had its hopes, oft unfulfilled;
Its sunrise visions, soaring high;
Its forward aim that seemed so nigh;
Its cup so near the lips, but spilled.

Miscellaneous

All that was worthy must live on;
Life has no word for honest waste.
Youth's work, so often marred by haste,
Must never sigh for chances gone.

And yet, 'tis well, each fight that's won
In youth or manhood, makes the man.
Our tangled ways we can not scan.
At length the Master's own, "Well done."

OUR DOUBTS

Our doubts are questions, yearnings for the truth.
But, alas, sometimes they are but driftings;
Chips floating on the trackless unknown waste;
Or carrier pigeons, lost in the great blue;
No pathway theirs, no guide, their home forgot.
Alas! alas! if no kind hand shall give
These drifts direction, to some harbored isle;
If no kind eye shall guide the pigeon's flight.
Questions are conflicts, often darkness, doubts,
Doubts may lead God-ward, craving for reply,
But too oft rebellious, wills defiant;
Dim, vague and hopeless; pathless, dark and drear.
Lost embassies are they; strayed messengers;
No home, no hope, no God; only despair.

MY GIRL AND I

Every evening about the twilight hour she enters softly through my study door.

No matter what I may be doing, with a sweet imperiousness that admits of neither delay nor contradiction she leads me to a corner of the study where there is a big cosy armchair.

I seat myself in it, and she climbs upon my knee. At first she sits up straight, and shakes loose her wealth of golden curls. Then she looks around carefully to discover the exact location of some treacherous buttons that might make captive some of those golden treasures. Then she settles herself daintily, nestling closely to my left side—always the left side.

She pats my cheeks gently with some expressions all her own. No one would pretend to interpret them into cold language. They have an eloquence all their own.

One day she said to me: "I do not like whiskered men; I cannot see their faces. I do not know whether they are good or not."

That brings back to me all the memories of that first hour of scrutiny. Blessed be Mercy, who reigned supreme that evening! Supposing that twin angels with fiery swords had driven me forth from Paradise to wander forever in some new and unknown lands. There is no Paradise regained. There may be a new Paradise for some; but it

never can be the same Paradise. And the saddest thing about this lost Paradise is that one is not allowed to remember any more forever the words and scenes that were left behind at the gates.

But blessed be Mercy, I was allowed to stay in Paradise, the Paradise that my girl and I loved so well.

After a while she remains very quiet for just a little time. Then she calls me pet names. What are they? Only we two know, and only we two could understand. They are very familiar, and they are very sweet. Then there is silence again, for we like to sit in the growing shadows, my larger hand resting on her smaller hand as she gently pats it with the other little hand.

Then comes the time for the holy inquisition which is never missed. Perhaps she begins, or she may wait for me to begin.

I say, "Have you been a good girl to-day?"

She never answers hastily. She waits awhile, just patting my hand softly. Then she looks into my eyes with all the sweet, transparent honesty of a child, and answers, "Yes, I have tried to be a good girl all day."

I never question her further. It is not a confessional, and we fully trust each other.

But my turn must come. Looking very straight into my eyes, she says with a simplicity and directness that could not permit of any evasion, "Have you been a good boy to-day?"

I dare not answer hastily, but I do not wait as

long as she did for a reply. I answer, "Yes, dear; I have tried to be good to-day."

Her answer is always about the same, "Well, if you have tried to be good, I guess it is all right." How merciful a verdict!

Then after another little silence she says, "Now tell me a story." Or perhaps it is, "Shall I tell you a story?" We have bridged all differences of age in our sweet comradeship.

Perhaps I say, "Oh, I am so busy to-night; I have to make some calls on some sick people." A little shadow passes over her face, a shadow of sympathy and apprehension. But she says nothing of this. We understand.

In a moment her brow clears, and she says, "All right; then I will tell you a little story." She never tells it just the same. Perhaps it has a little flavor of the Old Testament. She is not always very literal. She has her own explanations. Perhaps Joseph and Moses and David and Daniel appear with utter disregard for chronology or theology. More often the little lame boy down the street, or "Boy Douglas," the big St. Bernard dog across the way, has done some wonderful thing. Or some little fluffy kittens have come all blind into a world of sunshine. Or her imagination takes wings, and in some golden cloud at sunset she saw doors open, and such wonderful visions linger for a moment. They are always very short stories, and always full of new delight.

Now my turn has come, and I must tell my

Miscellaneous

story. Sometimes it is a very short one; but it always must be told. Perhaps there is in it just a glimpse of the pure Boy of the carpenter's home at Nazareth. If apocryphal, it is always reverent. But there are stories of the squirrel family in their nest in the hollow tree, where the nuts have been stored for the winter; or of the woodchucks underground, and of the mischievous boy who shut the front door of the house, and made the poor little woodchucks crouch away frightened in the dark back rooms. Or it may be of some little crippled child, who after a while was able to walk again, perhaps because some other little children went without candy for a long time, and saved a lot of pennies to get some wonderful doctor to cure him. Or about some brave fireman who went up a high ladder into some burning building, and brought down some little one to his mother in safety. She loves to hear some story of something that I saw myself. But she loves also to hear some commonplace story of childish unselfishness that had no apparent reward except the happiness of the victory.

Sometimes it may be all of the imagination; and we traverse strange lands together, and visit far-off islands where the birds and insects are unlike those which we have seen. Or we open some heavenly door just long enough to hear the rustle of angelic wings, or catch glimpses of some wonderful streets of a new and beautiful city, where there are no poor little sad children, but all are happy together. But we generally deal with earthly things.

Nor are we always serious in our stories. Sometimes there will be stories full of funny things, and we laugh together until no doubt people passing by the open window wonder what happy children's party is going on just above them.

After the stories are told we sit very still for a moment. Then just a little prayer, all of faith and all of love. What else is there in a child's theology? What is there that is essential beyond these in any of our theologies?

Then there may be another little time of quietness. It takes much longer to tell the story of a twilight hour than to live it.

Then she slides down as quietly as she climbed upon my knee. The study door closes as softly as it opened, and I am alone again. But no man after such an hour is just the same man as he was before. He has learned more than all his books can teach him. The memory will last when, alas! these scenes can never be ours again in this life.

Sometimes the world must grow smaller to us that it may grow larger. Sometimes we can learn more from one little child than from all of our learned philosophers. And it is so beautiful a way to learn.

MY WEALTH

Could I have the wealth of India,
Or the Yukon's hoards of gold;
Or the fabled stores of Cræsus,
Or the pearl-lined depths of old;

Could I add the gathered millions
Of the city and the mine;
And the spider webs of rail-road
To the factory; and combine

All the treasures man has gathered,
All that misers love to hoard,
To the vast reserves of riches
That a gracious God has stored;

Could I sign my name unquestioned,
To some fabulous amount;
Could I multiply by figures,
Swifter than machines could count;

Were I master of the ocean,
And dictator on the land;
Could I turn the stones to diamonds;
And make golden all the sand;

Poems of the Home and the Homeland

Could I build my stately mansions;
Multiply each great arcade;
Could I lay out mighty cities,
And control the marts of trade;

Send my buildings, mounting skyward;
Sink my shafts a mile below;
Float my ships on lake and ocean;
Govern every river's flow;

Could I laugh in my defiance,
With my air-ships, swift of wing;
Make the laws that govern nations,
Be the world's unquestioned King;

Had I wealth, and had I splendor,
That no dream of man e'er guessed;
Flinging wide my vast dominion,
Far as East is from the West;

Yet some eve, when I in silence,
With my secret heart communed;
And the universe around me
Seemed in harmony attuned;

I will reckon up my conquests;
All my losses, all my gains;
Was it worth the cost to struggle,
For the little that remains?

Miscellaneous

Gone, the peace, and gone, the sweetness,
Of a heart content and calm;
Gone, the love that makes life worthy,
Makes the common song a psalm.

Lost, the sweet, unselfish yearning,
Lost, capacity for strife,
Strife that purifies, ennobles,
Makes the larger, richer life.

Wealth has wings, its wings are broken;
Fame's brief glitter quickly fades.
Time moves on with rapid footsteps,
And we near the gloomy shades.

Then we strike life's final balance;
Only he is rich who can
Keep his soul in love's communion,
True to God and true to man.

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